

The FCC is considering a proposal that digital televisions be required to work only according to the rules set by Hollywood, through the use of a "broadcast flag" assigned to digital TV broadcasts.

Through the deliberations of a group called the Broadcast Protection Discussion Group which assiduously discounted the public's rights to use flexible information technology, Hollywood and leading technology players have devised a plan that would only allow "professionals" to have fully-functional devices for processing digital broadcast materials.

Hollywood and content producers must not be allowed to determine the rights of the public to use flexible information technology. The idea of the broadcast flag is to implement universal content control and abolish the right of free citizens to own effective tools for employing digital content in useful ways. The broadcast flag is theft.

In the ongoing fight with old world content industries, the most essential rights and interests in a free society are those of the public. Free citizens are not mere consumers; they are not a separate group from so-called "professionals." The stakeholders in a truly just information policy in a free society are the public, not those who would reserve special rights to control public uses of information technology.